

Message from the Mayor

This past year as your Mayor and Town Council Chairman has been a huge privilege and honour. It has given me the opportunity to meet lots of organisations and interesting people. St Austell really has some wonderful people, businesses and community groups. The coronavirus pandemic and restrictions on social gatherings prevented some events and some projects, but nevertheless it was a busy and productive year. Some of our achievements are listed below which I hope you find interesting.

We have declared a climate emergency and created a Climate and Environment Committee to take forward our climate change agenda. We have reviewed our grass cutting and wildflower planting to improve local biodiversity. In 2021/22 we created 4 new wildflower areas and planted 120 trees. We have erected a polytunnel and created a nursery area at our depot and are growing plants and trees and recycling plants to support our greening endeavours.

We are working closely with Cornwall Council to deliver a Town Heritage Scheme which has attracted a grant of £980,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This project will improve a number of town centre buildings and includes some public realm works to improve the wall and fountain on the edge of Holy Trinity Church.

To compliment this we have attracted £165,000 of funding from Cornwall Council to plan measures to revitalise the town centre. The Town Council is co-ordinating this work and a partnership made up of representatives from councils, business and voluntary sectors is guiding the work which will hopefully put St Austell in a strong position to bid for Government funding to make major improvements to the town centre.

All towns and cities are suffering from anti-social behaviour and drink and drug related issues. We have continued to focus resource on measures aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour in the town centre and actively helped to attract grants and fund extra hours for the Security Personnel employed by the BID. We work very closely with the Police and other agencies and have maintained an excellent CCTV system and increased budgets for monitoring and maintenance of the camera systems. It is pleasing to note that as a result of the efforts locally St Austell has moved from the top of the league table for anti-social behaviour in Cornwall to fifth place. This does not mean that we can rest on our laurels. We will continue to lobby nationally and locally for more Police resource and for measures which will improve public safety in St Austell.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as Mayor and have undertaken many community and civic events and enjoyed a whole range of birthdays, wedding anniversaries and community events. During these celebrations, it has been a real privilege to meet residents and to listen to and share life stories and experiences.

I hope that members of the public will recognise how much work has gone into the last year and how far the Town Council has grown while maintaining a below average council tax and a very lean staffing team.

I would like to thank all of our partners and the people of St Austell for their help and support during this busy year and record a special thank you to my deputy, Councillor Andrea Lanxon, and the Council staff that supported me throughout my period in office.

Richard Pears
Mayor of St Austell

2021/22



St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council has the following responsibilities:

- Parks at Bethel, Chapel Fields, Chy Pons, Jubilee Meadow, Landrew Road, Linear Park, Lostwood Road, Manfield Way, Penmere Road, Polmarth Close, Poltair, Prince Charles, Sandy Bottom, The Meadows, Thornpark Road, Truro Road, Woodland Close and Woodland Road.
- The management of St Austell Library
- Priory and Tregonissey Lane End Car Parks
- Public conveniences, Priory Car Park
- Allotments at Alexandra Road
- Maintenance of footpaths
- Weed spraying
- Grass cutting on roadside verges and roundabouts for Cornwall Council
- Flower beds
- Town centre CCTV
- The House Youth Centre

Contact Details

St Austell Town Council
The Stable Block
Pondhu House
Penwinnick Road
St Austell
Cornwall PL25 5DP

Telephone: 01726 829859

E-mail: info@staustell-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.staustell-tc.gov.uk

Cornwall Council

Cornwall Council has wide ranging responsibilities, including:

- Education
- Social Services
- Highways and Transportation
- Determining Planning Applications and Development Control.
- Collection of Council Tax and Business Rates
- Benefits Administration
- Housing and homelessness

- Libraries and Arts
- Fire Brigade
- Refuse collection, recycling and waste disposal
- Environmental Health
- Leisure
- Youth Services
- Crime and Disorder/Anti-Social Behaviour
- Cemeteries

Cornwall Council can be contacted at:

Cornwall Council
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro
Cornwall TR1 3AY

Telephone: 0300 1234 100

E-mail: enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk

Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk

In the 2021/22 civic year Cornwall Council had three Councillors representing St Austell. These were Councillors Double, Rowse and Pears.

St Austell Town Council has 20 Councillors (7 Councillors representing the Central and Gover Ward, 6 Councillors representing Poltair and Mount Charles Ward and 7 representing Bethel and Holmbush Ward). Town Council elections were held on the 6th May 2021, 9 councillors were re-elected and 11 new councillors were appointed. A list of current Councillors is included later in this report.

Each year, the Council elects one councillor to be the Mayor who then acts as the civic leader and chairs Council meetings. The Council has adopted a code of conduct and is committed to proper standards and sound governance arrangements.

Meetings are currently held in Cornwall Council's St Austell Information Centre or at the Town Council's offices at The Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell. The full Council meets approximately every six weeks. In addition to the full Council meetings, the Council has four standing committees to ensure the effective management of its business:

- Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Planning & Regeneration Committee
- Community Committee
- Climate and Environment Committee

There is a public participation session at each of the Council's official meetings to allow members of the public to make comments or raise issues about items on the agenda. From time to time, working groups are formed to address particular issues. A calendar of Council meetings for the forthcoming year can be found on the Council's website at www.staustell-tc.gov.uk. Agendas and minutes are published on the website.

The Council employs eleven full-time and ten part-time members of staff who are based either at the Stable Block or St Austell Library. Key contacts are:

David Pooley – Town Clerk
 Sara Gwilliams – Deputy Town Clerk
 Steve Skinner – Operations Manager
 Kimberley Gay – Finance/Administrative Support Officer (Part-time)
 Terry Shaw – Library Manager

The Town Council serves the town of St Austell which has a population of approximately 22,000.

Services and facilities provided within the town of St Austell are also enjoyed by people living in the surrounding villages and by the many tourists who visit the town each year.

The Town Council is very keen to improve local pride in St Austell and to ensure that however the town changes in the future the process is managed and that appropriate infrastructure accompanies it. An important role of the Council is to represent and champion local residents and businesses to ensure that their views are taken into account by the larger organisations operating and investing in the area.

The Town Council is consulted on all planning and some licensing applications in its area and in relation to many of the other services provided by Cornwall Council.

The Town Council seeks to work in partnership with Cornwall Council and other agencies to ensure delivery of the highest quality services and facilities to local residents.



Flowers blooming at Poltair Park July 2020

Photo: Paul Williams



2021/22 Activities

Service Devolution

The Town Council is a strong advocate for service devolution and in recent years has taken a broad range of services and assets from Cornwall Council including toilets, allotments, parks and open spaces, maintenance of highways grassed areas, car parks, the library and The House Youth Centre. The Town Council's visionary devolution project was praised by the late Secretary for State, James Brokenshire MP, and by Cornwall Council and others as an example of good practice.

The benefits of the local management of services are being demonstrated through better maintenance of parks, the library, public conveniences and play areas and improved floral displays, tree planting and grass cutting.

Climate Change

The Town Council has declared a climate emergency and created a Climate and Environment Committee to oversee environmental issues. It supported and took part in a Climate Change Festival at Cornwall College in November 2021 to raise awareness of climate issues. An action plan has been developed and initiatives undertaken including tree planting, creation of wildflower and wildlife areas, plant recycling, seed gathering and the growing of plants and trees. Safe and natural treatments for weeds have been trialled and initiatives including e-bikes, cycling and walking trails and electric vehicle charging points are being explored with Cornwall Council.

Town Heritage Scheme

The Town Council continued to work with Cornwall Council and the Market House to implement a Townscape Heritage (TH) scheme for St Austell. Townscape Heritage schemes fund quality traditional repairs to targeted historic buildings in Conservation Areas. The Heritage Lottery Fund provided a grant of £980,000 and this generated significantly more investment in valuable historic buildings. A number of buildings and in particular shopfronts have been improved.

St Austell Business Improvement District (BID)

The Business Improvement District (BID) for St Austell is funded by local business ratepayers in the town centre to enhance and promote the BID area.

The Town Council is pleased to support and work closely with the BID which plays an important role in the town and organises a number of events and environmental and security initiatives in the town centre. The Town Council and the BID fund security personnel who patrol primarily the town centre but also other areas in St Austell with anti-social behaviour. Regular meetings are held with the police, Cornwall Council's ASB officers and CCTV staff to ensure that intelligence is shared and appropriate supportive or enforcement action is taken.

CCTV

The CCTV system in St Austell is owned and maintained by the Town Council with monitoring arrangements shared with Newquay Town Council. In 2021/22 the Town Council acquired a redeployable or mobile CCTV camera which can be located at sites across the town temporarily as needed.

Youth Services

The Town Council has provided annual funding of £20,000 to secure the future of The House youth project. A lease has been granted to Young People Cornwall who have re-located their headquarters to the building. This has secured over 40 jobs in St Austell and created a centre of excellence for youth services in the town. Face to face services were restricted during the pandemic but are now fully functioning again. Youth workers undertake outreach work on behalf of the Council when issues with young people arise.

Library

The Town Council has refurbished the St Austell Library, arranged events and computer classes and increased footfall by over 12%. St Austell library is one of the busiest libraries in Cornwall and under the Town Council's management continues to provide benefits way beyond the traditional functions of a library.

Environmental initiatives

The Town Council undertakes a number of environmental projects each year. In 2021/22 we:

- Planted 120 trees some of which were donated to the Town Council;
- Trained two grounds maintenance apprentices, one of which was largely funded by the St Austell Bay Economic Forum;
- Installed a new pedestrian safety barrier at the roadside entrance to Poltair Park;
- Created new wildflower areas at Bethel Park, Brockstone Road and

Cosgarne Triangle;

- Lifted trees and carried out safety surface improvements to make Poltair Park safer;
- Created three new 5-a-side pitches at Bethel Park, The Meadows and Poltair Park;
- Constructed new fencing at Linear Park.

Other initiatives

The Town Council has:

- Operated a small grants scheme for local community and charitable groups. The Council gave 22 grants totalling £6,740 in 2021/22 which included 4 grants totalling £600 for community groups celebrating the Queen's platinum jubilee;
- Provided a number of larger grants including grants to Studio 4 (£5,000), St Austell BID (£5,276), and Town Heritage Initiative (£8263.75);
- Attracted £165,000 grant funding from Cornwall Council to undertake master planning work and arrange events to boost the town centre footfall and economic viability;
- Worked closely with a Falmouth University graduate to develop a new cashless payment system for the Priory Car Park which is proving really popular with users;
- Supported the Tour of Britain first stage across Cornwall and assisted with a number of events in the town to celebrate the race coming through St Austell;
- Undertaken pre-planning consultations with developers, arranged large-scale public meetings to give residents the opportunity to raise concerns or suggest improvements to major planning proposals and responded to 148 planning application consultations.



HM Queen meets St Austell Town Clerk David Pooley on June 11 2021
Photo: Paul Williams



Outgoing Mayor Tim Styles (left) with incoming Mayor Richard Pears
Mayor making in Holy Trinity Church in St Austell October 2021
Photo: Paul Williams



Mayor Richard Pears
Mayor making in Holy Trinity Church in St Austell October 2021
Photo: Paul Williams

Annual Accounts 2021/22

The Council's Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The Council's Accounts are audited annually by an independent internal auditor and forwarded to PKF Littlejohn LLP, an external auditor, for final appraisal. These accounts are subject to audit.

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2022

2020/21 £		2021/22 £
	Income	
762,958	Precept Payments	795,350
130,736	Car Park Income	243,984
31,067	Council Tax Grant	30,200
542	Library Income	5,918
199,647	Other Income	279,571
693	Public Convenience Charges	2,992
121,082	Transfers from Reserves	16,683
1,246,724	Total Income	1,374,697
	Less Operating Expenses	
479,487	Total Employee Expenses	514,891
203,522	Total Premises Expenses	204,931
249,631	Total Supplies and Services	274,021
40,341	Total Transport Related Expenses	30,199
191,463	Transfers to Reserves	339,706
1,164,444	Total Operating Expenses	1,363,748
82,280	Net Surplus (+) / Deficit (-)	10,948

Balance Sheet As at 31 March 2022

31 March 2021 £		31 March 2022 £
	Assets	
	Current Assets	
20,432	Debtors and Prepayments	31,304
217,570	Bank and Cash	195,009
469,103	Short Term Investments	822,552
707,105	Total Current Assets	1,048,865
451,128	Fixed Assets	486,091
	Liabilities	
	Current Liabilities	
36,791	Creditors and accruals	44,580
36,791	Total Current Liabilities	44,580
	Net Assets	1,490,376
	Equity	
96,892	Asset Revaluation Reserve	96,892
354,236	Capital Financing Reserve	389,199
319,731	Earmarked Reserves	642,753
350,583	General Reserve	361,532
1,121,442	Total Equity	1,490,376
	Notes	

1. Ceremonial assets have been valued by independent valuers using an insurance methodology as at 31st March 2010. It is not considered necessary to re-value all assets annually. Other fixed assets are included at cost.
2. Debtors and prepayments include an insurance premium and car park income in transit.
3. Accounts payable relate largely to contract and operational expenses paid by direct debit after the year end.



St Austell Town Centre December 2020
Photo: Paul Williams



Flowers blooming opposite the library July 2020
Photo: Paul Williams